STENOGRAPHY:

OR,

A CONCISE and PRACTICAL

SYSTEM

OF

Short-Hand Writing.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN APPENDIX,

Containing a brief Survey of the Rise and Progress of the Art; with an impartial Account of the various Methods which have been published since its first Introduction.

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SECOND EDITION, with considerable Improvements.

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DEDICATION.

TO HIS

ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK,

Prince of Wales, &c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING

TREATISE

IS,

With all due Humility and Respect,

INSCRIBED,

By his Royal Highness's

Most devoted,

Most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

W. WILLIAMSON.

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W. Williamson

PREFACE.

THE multiplicity of Syſtems of Short-hand writing which have been recommended to the Public by their Authors, is, perhaps, the principal cauſe of its being ſo much neglected. This variety ſerves to excite diſguſt in ſome, whilſt others, deſirous of ſo uſeful an acquiſition, are at a loſs to determine the ſyſtem beſt ſuited to anſwer their purpoſe.

It muſt be acknowledged that the obſcurity which overſpreads the generality of former methods, is ſo very diſcouraging, that nothing but a determined

reſolution, together with intenſe application, is ſufficient to overcome. To acquire a knowledge of the art by their ſcheme, to ſuch a degree of perfection as to render it uſeful, as much time and attention is requiſite as is neceſſary for the learning a new language.

The want of a Syſtem of Short-hand, founded upon juſt principles, which might be termed univerſal, has been the ſubject of complaint. Mr. Byrom was much more ſucceſsful in his endeavours to obtain this end, and his method more deſervedly eſteemed than any of his predeceſſors; yet, there is little ground to expect the wiſhed-for univerſality, when the art itſelf is only intended to ſupply a defect in the common mode of writing; however, the more ſimple the principles, and the better adapted to practice any particular me-

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thod is, the greater chance it has of being generally received.

Besides the discouragement arising from the great variety of systems, objections have been made to the art itself, which have deterred many from making any attempts towards learning it; the principle of which are,—words being written by the sounding consonants only, without inserting all the letters commonly used in the spelling them, is by some considered to be greatly prejudicial to true orthography, as well as a means of destroying good writing.—A little reflection will convince any one that these objections are ill founded.

Though there are no more letters inserted than sufficient to convey the sound of the word, yet this practice cannot be prejudicial to orthography; because when writing Short-hand, we are

differently employed, the ſame as when making figures ;--figures being arbitrary marks for the words or numbers they re-preſent. It has never been obſerved that an accountant, whoſe buſineſs chiefly conſiſted in figuring, to be more defective in orthography, or write worſe than any other deſcription of men.

Nothing is ſo deſtructive to good writing, than when the writer is more anxious to catch the ſentiment, than careful about the formation of his letters, which frequently happen with ſtudents of law, phyſic, &c. who attend pleadings at the bar or public lectures, and take notes in the common hand, which every one know, requires more diſpatch than long hand, even in the moſt contracted way, will admit of; by which means they get a habit of forming their letters in ſuch a manner, that they them-

ſelves

ſelves are ſometimes at a loſs to decypher what they have written. Short-hand removes this inconvenience, and enables the practitioner not only to take much more of a diſcourſe than he poſſibly can by the ordinary method, but with greater eaſe to himſelf, as well as preſerve his long hand.

Another objection which prevents many from atttending to learn Short-hand is, the time ſuppoſed requiſite for attaining to a tolerable degree of perfection in this art. This objection is occaſioned by the immenſe number of arbitrary and ſymbolical marks, together with the numberleſs rules and nice diſtinctions with which moſt of the former methods abound. But the ſimplicity of the following ſyſtem is obvious.—Inſtead of its being a work of time, or a laborious undertaking to acquire a thorough know-

ledge

ledge of it, the theory may be obtained in a few hours, ſo as to be enabled to write any word; and even the practical part is not ſo difficult as may be imagined; for, when the learner can write the letters, and unite them without heſitation, every time he practices will acquire additional freedom of hand, till he arrives at the ſame degree of dexterity he writes in the common way.

The Appendix was written at the requeſt of ſome perſons of diſtinction whom I had the honor of inſtructing, not with a view of depriciating the performances of others, but merely to exhibit the leading principles upon which the different Syſtems of Stenography are founded, for the uſe of ſuch who have not leiſure nor opportunity of examining the various methods now in uſe. In

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the execution of which I have uſed the utmoſt impartiality, as unſolicitous of favor, as regardleſs of the reproaches of my cotemporaries.

The procuring ſo many different methods was attended with no ſmall difficulty, as well as expence. This I thought neceſſary, that I might neither cenſure nor approve upon the authority of others, but to the beſt of my own judgment give a fair and candid repreſentation of ſuch as came into my hands.

I cannot conclude without returning my ſincere and moſt grateful acknowledgments to a generous public for the favourable reception which the former edition of this Treatiſe met with. In return for which I have uſed every endeavour

deavour to merit a continuance of their approbation, by rendering this Syſtem as complete as the nature of the ſubject will admit.

There are but few ſpecimens given, that the learner thereby may be the more induced to copy ſomething himſelf, which will be a means of making him not only ready in joining the letters, but likewiſe read them with greater facility when put together into words. —They are written large and open, that they may be the better underſtood, but the ſmaller the letters are made, ſtudying due proportion, they are ſooner wrote, and appear more beautiful.

STENOGRAPHY.

EXpedition and legibility being the eſſential properties of Short-hand, our attention ought chiefly to be directed to theſe objects.—In order to ſecure both, the alphabet ſhould conſiſt of as few characters as poſſible, and the marks uſed to repreſent the letters, formed on the ſimpleſt conſtruction, provided they are readily diſtinguiſhed: we therefore, are at liberty to take every advantage that nature affords us,

without regard to the minutiæ of orthography, which yet are worthy of attention, when they can be made ſubſervient to our purpoſe.

The Engliſh language being a compound of ſeveral others, many letters are introduced in words which have not the leaſt connection with their ſound.—The deſign of Short-hand being to bring writing as near to ſpeech as poſſible, due regard muſt be had to pronounciation.—As words are conveyed to our ears by ſounds alone, in like manner they may be noted down according to their ſound.—We do not underſtand a perſon ſpeaking to us, by the number of letters which compoſe the words he utters; but by combining thoſe ſounds, the idea meant to be conveyed is formed in the mind.

Notwithſtanding the infinite variety

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of ſounds, yet thoſe that are ſimple are fewer in number than the letters of our common alphabet; conſequently words may be expreſſed by fewer letters than are commonly uſed in the ſpelling of them.

The alphabetical characters, comprehending vowels and conſonants, are 26 in number; the greateſt part of them are of the latter deſcription, and are moſt uſeful, becauſe the vowels unite the conſonants together.—The vowels have a ſimple articulate ſound, formed by the impulſe of the breath, and by opening the mouth ſo as to give them a certain modulation.—A conſonant cannot be perfectly ſounded by itſelf, but joined with a vowel, forms a compound articulate ſound, by a particular motion of the various organs of ſpeech. —"It is the conſonants which break and

" diſtinguiſh the voice moſt, and make
" the principal part of articulation.—
" Without the conſonants language
" would be indiſtinct, and reſemble the
" cries of wild beaſts; therefore the
" conſonants may be ſaid to be the
" bones and ſinews of a language, while
" the vowels are little more than the
" vehicles of breath by which they are
" announced."

Before we aſcertain the number of letters neceſſary to expreſs the different ſounds, it will be proper to conſider the common alphabet more particularly.

The vowels have all a ſoft ſound, ſomewhat ſimilar to each other, pronounced by the breath alone, without that motion of the tongue and lips, which is abſolutely neceſſary in pronouncing the conſonants.—As the vow-

els are only the breath paſſing between the conſonants, thereby coupling them together, hence the neceſſity of their frequent uſe, inſomuch that a ſyllable cannot be written without one or more of them;—leaving out the vowels, therefore, will be of great advantage in promoting expedition; this may be done with ſafety;——for, in expreſſing the conſonants, the ſound of the word, in many inſtances, is conveyed without inſerting any vowels.—This more fully appears when we conſider that two conſonants in the beginning of a word cannot be expreſſed without ſounding a vowel between them; with this exception, when a double conſonant begins the word, ſuch as *th*, *ch*, *ſh*, &c. But theſe form a compound ſound, and ſhall have marks to repreſent them:——likewiſe, if two conſonants come together

in

in the middle of a word, and both are diſtinctly expreſſed, it is on account of the ſyllable being divided.

That vowels may be left out in the middle of words, as well as at the beginning and end, when they are ſilent, will further appear, if we conſider, that in naming the conſonants, we ſound a vowel either before or after; when we pronounce *b*, it ſounds the ſame as *be*; the ſame is the caſe with *c*, *d*, *g*, *j*, *k*, *p*, *q*, *t*, *v*.—In like manner we ſound a vowel before *f*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, *s*, *x*; when *h* is pronounced, it is the ſame as *aitch*.

Though we can with the greateſt ſafety leave out vowels in the middle of words, as the conſonants will ſupply them; yet they ſometimes ſound ſo ſtrong at the beginning and end, that, without a vowel, the conſonants would not

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convey the proper ſound of the word.— Example *according*, if the *a* were left out, it would ſound *cording*.—Again, *alter*, would be, *letter*, if the vowel were wanting.——It being neceſſary to expreſs a vowel at the beginning and end of words when it ſounds ſtrong, a character muſt be applied for this purpoſe. As no mark is ſooner made, nor more diſtinct than a point, thus, . on account of the frequent occurrence of vowels, it is a proper character to repreſent them, uſing it only when there is a neceſſity of inſerting a vowel.

In the choice and application of this mark I am not ſingular. Mr. Byrom and Mr. Palmer have no other characters for vowels, but expreſs them in the ſame manner. Every other ſhort-hand writer, beſides has aſſigned a ſeperate cha-

character for each vowel; but notwithſtanding they have uſed characters for the vowels, finding the great advantage of a ſimple point, they have frequently applied to its aid, although not without ſtrong objections; ſome pretend it is more difficult to make than a line, on account of the pen being taken off before it can be made. This objection is not of ſufficient force to deſerve a reply.

To determine which of the vowels the point is intended for, the following diſtinctions have been recommended. —When it is meant for *a* place the dote at the top of the next conſonant; when *e* a little farther down, and ſo on in the order of the vowels.—But it is obvious, theſe diſtinctions are ſo very nice, that it's impoſſible they can be perfectly attended to when diſpatch is required, and by accuſtoming ourſelves to the ſitua-

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tion of the dote, to give its ſound, and determine which vowel is meant, if miſplaced, which muſt frequently happen, we are thereby miſled; for this reaſon, I have avoided ſuch nice diſtinctions. Inſtead of any inconvenience ariſing from paying no regard to any particular ſituation for placing the dots, a material advantage is obtained, both in writing and alſo in the reading. A little practice will convince any perſon that the conſonants going before, or following, will not leave the vowel uncertain, but give it its proper ſound, which the word *according* before mentioned will fully demonſtrate; ſuppoſe we make only a dote for the *a*, and that point ſignifies one or other of the vowels; in this caſe it could not be miſtaken for any other vowel, as it would make no other word in the Engliſh language. Though many examples of this ſort may be pro-

duced; yet, the rule is not without exceptions. There are many words of different ſignifications, when ſtript of the vowels, and written by the conſonants only, are exactly alike:—For inſtance, *abject* and *object* are written by the ſame letters.—Again, *abſolute* and *obſolete*, *appoſite* and *oppoſite*, &c. But if in words, where there is no ſuch affinity in the writing, the conſonants going before or following determines the vowel; ſo likewiſe words, which in ſhort-hand are expreſſed by the ſame letters, the ſenſe will as readily determine. Suppoſing a ſentence run thus—*The perſon I ſpeak of, is the moſt abject of men.*——Again, *I object to the queſtion, as being improper.*——It's impoſſible for the firſt of theſe to be miſtaken for the latter, or *object* taken for *abject*.——Likewiſe, when *abſolute* or *obſolete* is uſed, it is im-

impoſſible they can be ſo confounded, as that the one ſhould be miſtaken for the other. A variety of examples of this ſort might be mentioned, but in all caſes where words are written alike, the ſenſe will determine their meaning.

Having ſhewn that there is not the leaſt neceſſity for diſtinguiſhing the vowels when writing Engliſh, which ſhort-hand is chiefly calculated for; but if a perſon has occaſion to write Latin in this way, it will be proper to attend to the above-mentioned diſtinctions, ſee Plate 1ſt, No. 1ſt.

Notwithſtanding what has been offered to demonſtrate that particular places for diſtinguiſhing of the vowels, are unneceſſary, perhaps ſome, who either from a knowledge of Mr. Byrom's method, or being accuſtomed to other ſyſtems, where

vowels in the middle of words are ſignified by writing the following conſonant in the vowel's place, ſhould be of a different opinion, and think ſome mode of diſtinguiſhing one vowel from another neceſſary, different places for each vowel may as well be obſerved in this ſyſtem as in any other; but experience will convince any one, that ſuch a practice retards the writer, and in ſome caſes renders the reading more difficult.

Having conſidered the vowels, and affixed a mark to repreſent them, we now proceed to examine the conſonants. The conſonants are twenty in number, but may be reduced to ſixteen; for firſt the letter *c* may be left out, and expreſſed by *k* or *s*, as it always ſounds like one or other of theſe letters, except when it is followed by *h*, which makes a diſtinct ſound.

F and

F and *V* being pronounced with the ſame organ of ſpeech, only *f* a little ſofter than *v*, one character may repreſent both, as they will eaſily be diſtinguiſhed. Example *favour*, if it were written thus, *ſafour*, the word could hardly be miſtaken. There is ſo great a ſimilarity in the ſound of theſe two letters, that, in general, all words ending with *f* or *fe*, their plurals in the common way are written *ves*. *

G and *J* have the ſame ſound, and may be expreſſed by one character; for inſtance *George* and *Judge*. To a perſon, unacquainted with the ſpelling of words, from the ſound, he would naturally conclude their initials were the ſame.

G when

* Mr. Palmer rejects this combination, which his author Mr. Byrom employs; but couples *v* and *w* together, where there is a leſs affinity of ſound.

G when ſounded hard, will eaſily be underſtood.

The ſound of *k* and *q* is likewiſe ſimilar. The latter is pronounced the ſame as the former, if *u* were not added to it, without which it never appears in a word.

Likewiſe *z* ſounds the ſame as *s* hard; and in our common way of writing is very often expreſſed by *s*, except when at the beginning of a word, which ſeldom happens.

Our alphabet then will conſiſt of the following letters, as being ſufficient to repreſent the various diſtinct ſounds of which our language is compoſed.—viz. *b, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, w, x, y.* *

* As *y* is a conſonant, and has a particular ſound when at the beginning of a ſyllable, we muſt have a character to expreſs it.

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The letters neceſſary for our purpoſe being determined, it now remains to find marks or characters to repreſent them; and in this the greateſt attention is requiſite, as to the ſimplicity of their form, their being diſtinct, and ſuited to join naturally one with another.—Theſe qualities are abſolutely neceſſary for the purpoſes of expedition; neither are they to be ſeperated, for a ſyſtem of ſhort-hand poſſeſſing any two of theſe properties in the greateſt perfection, and defective in the other, is proportionably incomplete; therefore the greateſt care is neceſſary both in the choice of letters and the application of them.

The moſt ſimple and eaſy made character which nature furniſhes us with, is a ſtreight line; this may be varied by placing it in different directions, horizontal, perpendicular, and oblique, to

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the right and left;——these are perfectly distinct from each other, see Plate 1, No. 2.

The next mark in simplicity to a strait line is a semi-circle, of which there are four. By dividing two circles, the the one by a perpendicular, and the other by a horizontal line, produces four distinct characters.——No. 3.

The streight lines and semicircles being now exhausted, and still some characters wanting, to provide ourselves with marks to supply the deficiency, we must have recourse to the streight lines: After a variety of experiments, I am convinced no characters can be procured, so easily made, and readily distinguished from each other, as those obtained from these lines by a twirl to the beginning of them. * By curving the ho-

* There is no other source from which characters

horizontal line on each ſide, we have two diſtinct characters, and by curving the perpendicular and oblique lines in the ſame manner, produces as many as we have occaſion for.—No. 5 and 6.

Objections have been made to the characters of the laſt deſcription, that making the twirl takes up as much time as the ſtreight line does, which makes it equal to forming an angle; but this is by no means the caſe, for being form'd by the turn of the pen, ſuch characters are little more trouble in making than a ſimple line, beſides their being ſo eaſily joined and ſo readily diſtinguiſhed, renders them preferable to angular characters or ſegments of an elipſis; for, tho'

ters can be obtained, except ſegments of an elipſis, a junction of the ſtreight lines, or an additional length or fulneſs of the ſtroke;---but theſe are liable to great inconveniencies.

each of these are sufficiently distinct when alone, yet the former, when join'd to other marks, is very liable to be mistaken, and with regard to the latter, many of them are not only very difficult to unite, but, when joined, are confused and indistinct.

Being now provided with simple, distinct, and easy characters, to represent the various sounds, the next thing to be considered is, the proper application of those marks to the letters of the alphabet. This I think a matter of consequence, and deserves the greatest care and attention.—To adapt them advantageously to the letters of the alphabet, we must have regard to the comparative frequency of each letter's occurrence, by applying those strokes which are most simple and easiest made to the letters commonly used in words. *

* Some professors of the art have affected to despise

The oblique line to the left, from its

ſpiſe this rule, as being too complex to be of any great uſe; others have paid no attention to it, but appear as inconſiderate in the application as in the choice of their characters: ſome indeed have been very attentive to this circumſtance, particularly the authors of *Natural Short-hand*, who, in order to aſcertain the frequency of the letter's occurrence, have recourſe to a letter-founder's bill, which ſhows, that 50 of one letter is equal to a far greater number of another;---however, I cannot perceive how theſe gentlemen reconcile their pretended attention to the application of the ſimpleſt ſtrokes to the letters which moſt frequently occur, with their principal ſcheme, of finding out marks ſuitable to the poſition of the organs of ſpeech in the various acts of articulation.---It is impoſſible to avoid confounding the one with the other, unleſs we ſuppoſe that he who created man, and endowed him with faculties capable of forming ideas, and organs fitted to expreſs them, that in the original formation of theſe organs, he not only made them to repreſent ſimple ſtrokes, but likewiſe to be uſed in proportion to the ſimplicity of their form!

peculiar inclination, is the moſt natural and eaſieſt made ſtroke ; our cuſtomary method of inclining the letters in long hand, teaches us to form it with equal readineſs upwards or downwards. In the alphabet this line repreſents *s*, which is as frequent in its occurrence as any letter in the alphabet.—To uſe this ſimple character as advantageouſly as poſſible, it may likewiſe repreſent *r* when made upwards, as it does *s* when made downwards, without the leaſt confuſion : the preceding or ſubſequent character will ſhew how it is made, whether upwards or downwards, when we make it a rule not to take off the pen till the word is written.—But though this character may repreſent both theſe letters, being ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed when joined to others, yet the latter of theſe, *r*, muſt have a mark to ſignify it when ſtanding alone, i. e. when there is no

other

other conſonant in the word, as *air*, *our*, *are*, &c. This being ſeldom the caſe, the common *r* written ſmall is eaſy made and very diſtinct; for theſe reaſons it is always to be uſed when there is no other conſonant to unite with it, and when there are two with a vowel or dipthong between them, as *error*, *prayer*, &c. No. 11.

As to the application of the other characters of the alphabet, though a reaſon may be aſſigned for each, either from the ſimilarity they bear to the letters they repreſent, or, what is more important, the convenience of their joining, or their frequent occurrence; yet it would be unneceſſary, as well as unprofitable, to mention the particular reaſons which induced me to apply thoſe characters to the different letters.—The reader may be aſſured they were not appropriated

propriated without repeated trials, and the practitioner will find, that in every combination which may possibly happen, they all unite with the greatest ease, and are perfectly distinct. No objection can be made to the joining of any of them, that is not overbalanced by other circumstances.

In order to facilitate the writing, it will be proper to apply characters to represent a few double consonants that often occur, such as *th*, *sh*, and *ch*—see the alphabet.—There is also the terminations *ing* and *tion*; to express these, put a point after *n*, for *ing*, thus—· and for the plural *ings* thus—: and for *tion* make *sn*.

To keep the writing as lineal as possible, not only renders it more beautiful, but likewise promotes expedition; there-

therefore, to avoid going too far out of the line when we have occaſion to make a double *s*, to repreſent which ſee the character for *ſiſs*.

Before the learner makes any attempt towards joining the letters, he muſt have them ſo impreſſed on his mind as to make any of the characters with the ſame readineſs he can letters in the long hand. When the alphabetical characters are thus impreſſed on the mind, the only difficulty which remains is, the joining thoſe letters together, in order to write words.

As the joining of the letters is the firſt, and indeed the only embarraſſment the learners meets with, and as the facility of writing wholly depends upon the freedom of making and joining them, in order to remove this difficulty, I have

given

given four plates, entitled, *the manner of joining the letters*, wherein all the characters are united together in the eaſieſt and moſt natural way; which will be found of more real advantage than a number of ſpecimens would have been. When the learner is at any time at a loſs how to join any of the characters, he may be conſtantly informed by having recourſe to theſe plates.

Each plate is divided with a double line into four columns, and each column is divided with a ſingle line, on the top of which is the letter which is joined to itſelf, and the reſt of the letters in alphabetical order. The left ſide of each column contains the letters ſeperately; on the right hand of the column is the letters on the left joined together.—Being ſo arranged is of the ſame uſe to the learner as a dictionary of any lan-

guage

guage is to thoſe not ſufficiently acquainted with it.

The utility of theſe plates are too obvious to require any further illuſtration. The number of ſpecimens which ſome authors of ſhort-hand conſider a recommendation, are only for the purpoſe of ſhewing the different combinations; if a perſon wiſhes to find any particular joining, much time and trouble muſt be beſtowed before he can be ſatisfied in his enquiry. But, by theſe plates, the combination of any two letters may inſtantly be found. Example, to join *b* and *k*, look in the firſt plate for *b*, and on the left hand of the column ſtands *b* and *k* ſeperate; oppoſite to them, on the right, ſtands *b* and *k* joined; in like manner the proper joining of any two letters may be diſcovered.

The number, as well as the characters to expreſs the ſounds which compoſes our language, being aſcertained, alſo having ſhewn that thoſe marks are formed ſo as to unite naturally with each other, without taking off the pen, and of courſe that every motion of the pen forms a character, we now proceed to ſhew, how words are to be written agreeable to our plan.

It was before obſerved that the vowels may be left out in the middle of words, as alſo at the beginning and end when the next conſonant will ſupply them, and only inſert ſuch conſonants as are abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the ſound. That theſe are ſufficient to convey the words intended, will appear from the following examples. The word *endeavour* may be written thus, *ndvr*. By giving theſe four conſonants their proper

ſound,

ſound, the word is fully expreſſed.—— Again, *indenture*, by the conſonants only thus, *ndntr*. A variety of examples of this nature may be given, but theſe alone are ſufficient to confirm the above obſervation.

The following general rules muſt be obſerved. To write all words according to the ſound, without regard to ſpelling. Agreeable to this rule the letter *c*, as it always ſounds either hard as *k*, or ſoft as *s*, (excepting when followed by *h*) is expreſſed by *k*, or *s*, according to its ſound. Ex. *concern*, *certain*, *practice*, &c. No. 8. But, when *c* goes before *h*, they form a different ſound, for which ſee the mark for *ch*.

Likewiſe, when two conſonants of the ſame kind meet together, only one of them is written. Ex. *common*, *attend*. No. 9.—But when there are two conſonants of the ſame kind, with a vowel or dipthong between them, in that caſe,

the consonant, if a streight line, is made a double length. Example, *memory*, *tutor*, *none*, &c. No. 10.

G and *h*, when meeting together, are silent for the most part, but sometimes they sound *f*, as *cough*, *enough*, &c. In such cases they are written with *f*. No. 14.—Likewise, *ph*, when they meet together, always sound *f*, and must therefore be expressed by *f*.

The character for *sſs* is always to be used wherever there is occasion to write a double *s*, though the spelling be *sus* or *sys*, when the sound is similar to the above character. Example, *process*, *system*, *suspect*, &c. No. 12.

The letter *m* in every case will signify the termination *ment*. Example, *appointment*, *commandment*, &c. No. 13.

2d. All vowels are expressed by a dot thus . ; they are never to be used in the middle of a word, but only when they sound strong at the beginning or end,

and

and are neceſſary to give the conſonants their ſound. Example, *alter*, *oratory*, &c. No. 7.

Y, when at the end of a ſyllable, (being then a vowel) is expreſſed the ſame as other vowels, therefore the character for *y* is never to be uſed but when it begins a ſyllable, as in *youth*, *yeſterday*, &c.

Compound words, ſuch as *not-withſtanding*, *ſome-times*, &c. may be written ſingly. To prevent miſtakes, proper names, unleſs ſuch as we are well acquainted with, may be written in long hand.

To prevent miſtakes, proper names, unleſs ſuch as we are well acquainted with, may be written in long hand.

All the points that are commonly uſed, may be made uſe of here, as they do not interfere with any of the ſhort-hand marks, unleſs a period, which may be ſignified by a wider ſpace. The ſpe-

cimens

cimens plate 6 and 7 are pointed in the common way, only a full ſtop is expreſſed by a more than ordinary ſpace; the other plate is not pointed, but the full ſtop is marked in the manner above mentioned.—When diſpatch is required, there is no time for pointing, neither is there any abſolute neceſſity for it, unleſs a full ſtop; the reſt may be marked afterwards, if judged neceſſary.

OF

OF READING.

AMONG the numbers who wiſh to become maſters of this art, and for that purpoſe ſpend ſome time in acquiring the alphabet, and have proceeded ſo far as to be able to write a ſentence with accuracy; many find, at this period, a little difficulty attending the reading of what they have written, and are diſcouraged from making any further progreſs; apprehending it impoſſible for them ever to read it with any degree of eaſe.——This haſty concluſion is ſupported by reflecting, that all vowels in the middle of words are omitted, and there being no ſimilarity between the ſhort-hand marks and the long-hand letters.——But, though the

omiſſion

omiſſion of vowels in the middle of words may for a while prevent the learner from reading what he has written, without heſitation; certain it is, this difficulty will vaniſh in proportion as the ſhort-hand marks become familiar to the eye, which nothing but practice can effect.

That the difficulty of reading ſhort-hand does not altogether depend upon the want of vowels, will appear by writing a ſentence in the common way, only inſerting ſuch vowels and conſonants as are made uſe of in ſhort-hand to expreſs the ſame words, writing thoſe in full which the letters in the alphabet ſtand for, not ſo much difficulty will be found in reading it as might be imagined.—— This ſhews, that it is more from the ſtrange and unuſual appearance which the characters at firſt have to the eye,

than from the few letters the word is compoſed of, that prevents the learner reading ſhort-hand with fluency; for, although he may be perfectly acquainted with the conſonants when ſeperate, yet, being united together, they aſſume a different appearance: it does not, therefore, ſo immediately occur to him what they ſtand for, his attention being neceſſarily taken up in recollecting them one by one; but were they ſo well known to him as the letters in the long hand, the whole to be apprehended in one view, he would diſcover the word with equal readineſs.—If cuſtom has reconciled us to the introduction of unneceſſary letters in the ſpelling of words, and many words are ſo clogged with letters, that, if all were ſounded, would render them unintelligible; it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that a little attention and practice will make words which are

expreſſed in a more natural way, as familiar to the eye, as thoſe that are written by the ordinary method.

If a ſentence is written or printed with capitals only, ſuch ſentence could not be read with ſo much freedom as in the common way. This heſitation does not proceed from a want of knowing the letters, but merely from the unuſual appearance they have to the eye.

As the difficulty of reading does not proceed from the want of vowels, neither does it from there being no ſimilarity betwixt the ſhort-hand marks and the long-hand letters. The common letters are in themſelves arbitrary marks, and have not the leaſt reſemblance in form to the poſition of the organs when expreſſing the ſound which they repreſent.

It could not be expected that one who had made little more progrefs in learning any language than a knowledge of the alphabet, that he fhould read a fentence freely. He can, perhaps, exprefs the alphabetic letters feperately with great readinefs; but when combined to form a word, he cannot pronounce them altogether, until he has firft named them one by one.——The fame holds with refpect to the reading of fhort-hand; it would be unreafonable for any one to imagine he fhould read fhort-hand, which perhaps he has only practifed a few weeks, with that freedom and eafe he can long hand, which he has been converfant with for a feries of years.

It is practice alone that enables us to read even print with fuch fluency.—So foon as we caft our eyes upon the letters,

the word occurs to the mind; and not only one word, but from obſerving a few, we frequently anticipate the remainder of the ſentence.

Before the learner attempts to read ſhort-hand, he muſt firſt write it, not only correctly, but likewiſe with freedom and eaſe. To read before he is ſo proficient as to write without heſitation, would only be embarraſſing himſelf with that which will follow of courſe. When he can write ſhort-hand as readily as he does the way he has been accuſtomed to, the reading will be proportionably eaſy.

When the learner begins to read what he has written, he muſt proceed letter by letter, till ſuch time as he knows the word by ſight. By keeping in our mind the ſenſe of what goes before, will greatly aſſiſt in the reading.—If the learner is

any

any time at a loſs, he is deſired to write the ſame letters in long hand; but, by practice, the ſhort-hand marks will ſoon become ſo familiar, that he will be under no neceſſity of making uſe of this expedient to aſſiſt him in decyphering.

OF

OF ABREVIATIONS.

EVERY ſyſtem of ſhort-hand, beſides the uſual omiſſion of letters in words, preſcribes further contractions as being abſolutely neceſſary to enable the writer to follow a public ſpeaker; and, indeed, however compleat the alphabet may be, by being formed upon the moſt juſt and natural plan, yet particular circumſtances will fall out, which require the aid of abreviations.—In proportion to the ſimplicity of the characters for words formed by alphabetic marks, there will be leſs occaſion for the uſe of contractions.

When great diſpatch is required, the contracting of both words and ſentences

is

is allowable, provided the ſenſe will ſupply the omiſſions. If a few letters or words convey what is meant, it is all one as if the whole were written.

A proper attention to the nature and idiom of our language, furniſhes abundant ſcope for abreviations; yet due care muſt be taken, leſt we carry our ſpeculations ſo far, as to render what we have written almoſt, if not altogether unintelligible.

It is not neceſſary to point out the great variety of abreviations which may be uſed; the writer's own ſagacity will ſuggeſt thoſe that are beſt adapted to his purpoſe. I ſhall only mention the following ſimple rules whereby much time will be ſaved in writing, neither will the reading be attended with any difficulty, as they are little more than the common

con-

contractions to which every perſon in ſome degree is accuſtomed.

1ſt. Write only the radical part of a long word, or ſo much of the word as will convey its ſound. Words of two or more ſyllables may be greatly contracted; what goes before or follows will ſupply the ſyllables that are omitted. Example, *proſperous*, *treacherous*, *ſymptoms*, &c. By writing the firſt ſyllable only, the others will be eaſily underſtood from the ſenſe.

2d. Not only words may be contracted, but likewiſe ſentences. If, by writing the radical part of a word, it is left intelligible, in like manner, by only writing the radical part of a ſentence, or the leading words whereupon the ſenſe chiefly depends, the others will readily occur.

3d. Points

3d. Points being the ſhorteſt of all marks, it is therefore neceſſary we ſhould make all the uſe of them we poſſibly can. They have hitherto been only applied to repreſent vowels, without any particular ſituation; they likewiſe may be uſed to great advantage in abreviating, by giving them other powers. By having a mark to ſignify the prepoſitions *circum:* and *trans:* will greatly ſhorten long words: without the invention of any new character to repreſent them, by giving a power to the initial of theſe ſyllables, with the aſſiſtance of a point over it, to denote the letter having that power, will anſwer our purpoſe.—The mark *s* with the point immediately above it, will repreſent the former; in like manner the letter *t* will ſignify the prepoſition *trans*. Thus, for *tranſcribe*, ſo *circumſcribe*, ſo *circumvent*. ſo This rule may be applied to any prepoſition.

Another advantageous purpoſe to which the point may be applied, is, to denote derivative ſubſtantives, adjectives, and adverbs, being placed either under or above the laſt conſonant, that is, thoſe words derived from that at the end of which the point is placed; example, if *commend* is written thus *commendable* thus *forget* will be thus *contemptuouſneſs* thus *ſufficiency* or *ſufficiently* willbe thus &c.

4th. The auxiliary verbs, ſuch as, *have, had, can, could, may, muſt, ſhall, ſhould,* &c. many of which being repreſented by a ſingle character, when two or more of theſe meet, they may be joined together, placing a point over them, to denote that each letter in the combination ſignifies a word. Example, *may have been* I am aware that the joining of many words is neceſſarily attended with confuſion; yet no difficulty can ariſe from this junction, be-

Becauſe the principal words will naturally aſſiſt in diſcovering thoſe that are thus united; beſides, they are ſo frequent in their occurrence, that a ſentence is ſeldom written without the aſſiſtance of theſe verbs.

Although the letters in the alphabet are only appropriated to a few words, yet they will ſtand for any word, the initial of which they are.

In every diſcourſe, let the ſubject be what it may, there are ſome principal words, which, either by their particular relation to the ſubject, or frequent occurrence, will be eaſily diſcovered, however conciſely written; therefore the initial of ſuch words will be ſufficient to expreſs the whole.——Example, if the following ſentence be written in the common hand thus, *Our bleſſed L. and S. has ſet before us a perfect p. of m. He inſtructed his f. not to look for h. in this w. and aſſured them of et. f. in the w. to come.*

—In this paſſage the words deſcribed by their initials are, from the nature of the ſubject, plainly pointed out, and in no ways liable to be miſtaken; the ſame deſcription of them in ſhort-hand will be ſufficient when writing after a ſpeaker.

Again, a pleader at the bar frequently makes uſe of theſe expreſſions: *With great ſubmiſſion to your Lordſhip—I humbly ſubmit to your Lordſhip*, &c. And in addreſſing a jury, *Gentlemen of the Jury, the circumſtances of the caſe which I am inſtructed to lay before you, are briefly theſe*, &c. may be written thus, *With great ſ. to your L. —I h. ſ. to your L. —G. of the J. the c. of the caſe which I am inſt. to lay before you are b. theſe.*

This rule is exceeding extenſive, and no other limits can be ſet to it, than, that in proportion to the writer's knowledge of the language, and the

ſub-

ſubject he has occaſion to write, he may uſe this mode of abreviation.

When there is an immediate repetition of any word or ſentence, write it only once, and draw a line under that word or ſentence, to ſhew that it is repeated. If a ſentence is at different times repeated in a diſcourſe, when you have written it once, write afterwards only the beginning of the ſentence, with this common mark, *&c.*

Every perſon's own underſtanding will ſuggeſt to him modes of contracting in this way, as well as abreviating in the common way of writing. Liberties in contracting are only to be uſed when occaſion requires, and a thorough knowledge of the ſubject they are writing will admit of it, without the hazard of being unintelligible.

When a perſon firſt makes trial to write after a public ſpeaker, he ought not to be diſcouraged, though he fail in

his

his firſt attempt; but let him be content to take the ſubſtance of what is then ſaid, and by perſeverance and practice he will come to write more and more, till at laſt he will be able to ſatisfy himſelf, and find it fully anſwer his expectations.

On his firſt attempt he will perhaps be ſo confuſed, as may prevent his writing with that expedition he can when by himſelf; but he muſt guard againſt that timidity, and not be anxious to write every word till he be thoroughly maſter of it, ſo as to be able to write in this way with the ſame freedom he can long hand, and content himſelf with writing the heads of a diſcourſe, till he can write the whole.

There are but few ſpecimens given, that the learner may be the more induced to copy ſomething himſelf, which is the only means of making him not only ready in joining the letters, but

like-

likewiſe read them with greater facility when put together in words. They are written large and open, that they may be the better underſtood; but the ſmaller the letters are made, ſtudying due proportion, they are ſooner written, and appear more beautiful.

The rules for contracting, as well as thoſe in the firſt part, are few and ſimple, yet they will be found not only more ſerviceable, but eaſier reduced to practice, than the long, elaborate, and perplexed rules which moſt writers on this ſubject have given. It has been my chief ſtudy through the whole to render the art ſimple and eaſy, uſing the utmoſt brevity conſiſtent with perſpicuity, that the meaneſt capacity may comprehend it.

Hitherto we have taken no notice of figures; the figures commonly made uſe of, are in themſelves arbitrary marks for the numbers they expreſs. All the

ad-

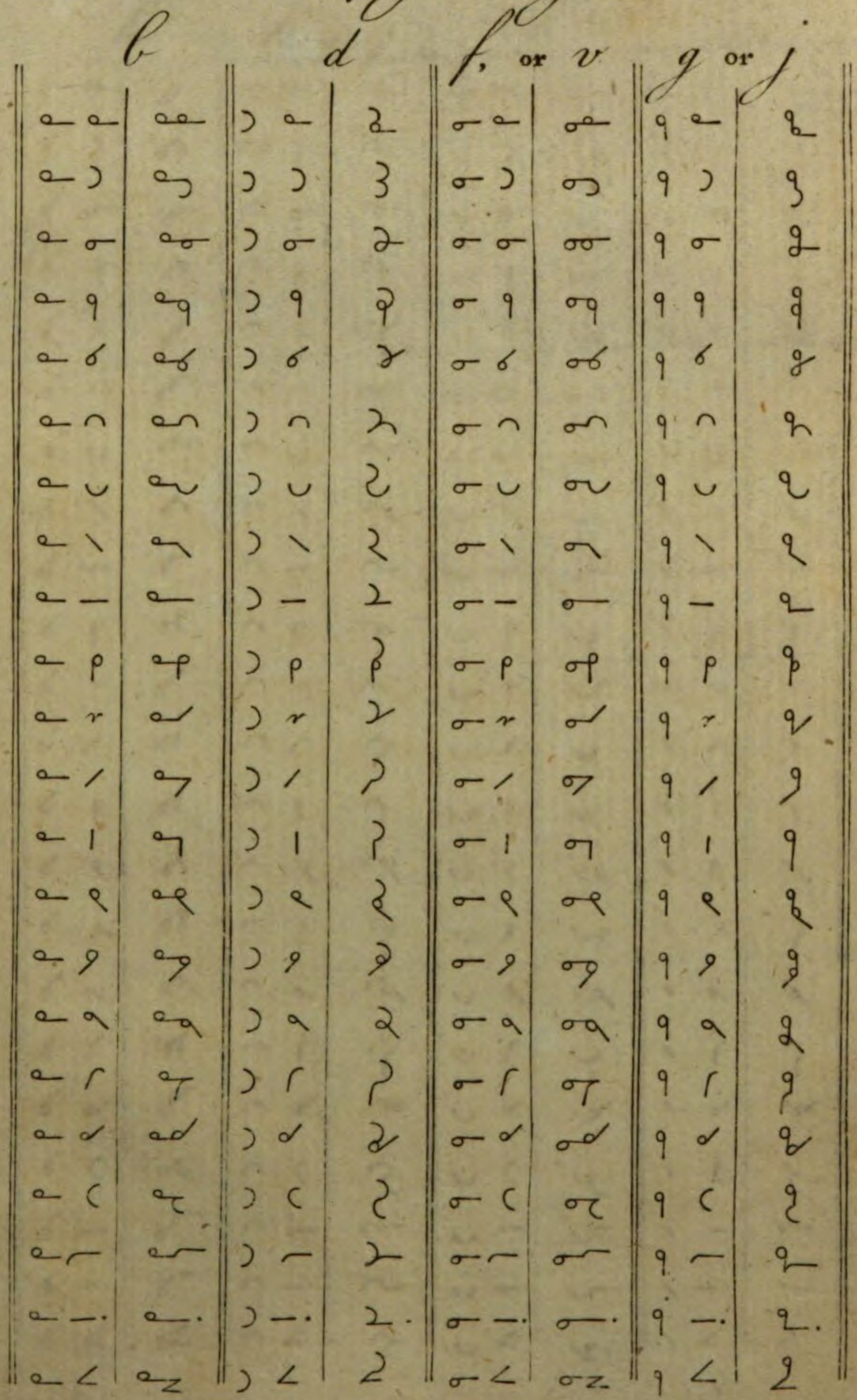
advantages that could be obtained by having another ſet of figures than thoſe in uſe would be ſo very trifling, that it is not worth while giving the learner any trouble about them. But, as one important uſe of ſhort-hand to ſome people, is, making ſecret memorandums, it may be of ſome uſe to ſuch to have numerical characters different from thoſe in uſe; therefore, thoſe who chuſe, may apply the four ſtreight lines, the four ſemicircles, and a ſegment of an elipſis. Uſing theſe characters to repreſent nine figures, which, together with a cypher for X. will anſwer the purpoſe, and may be joined in the ſame manner as when writing words.

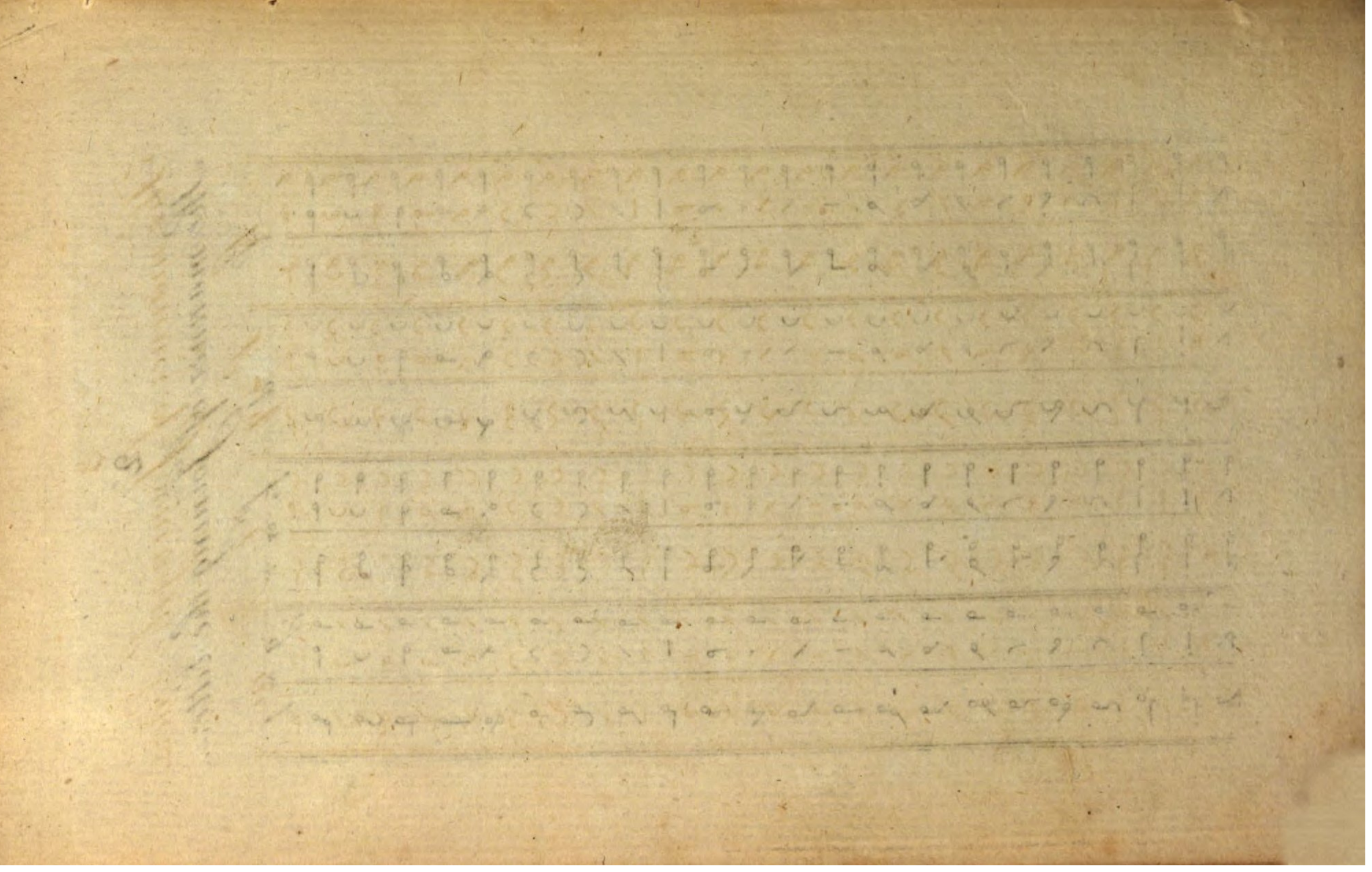
F I N I S.

The ALPHABET with the Prepositions & Terminations.

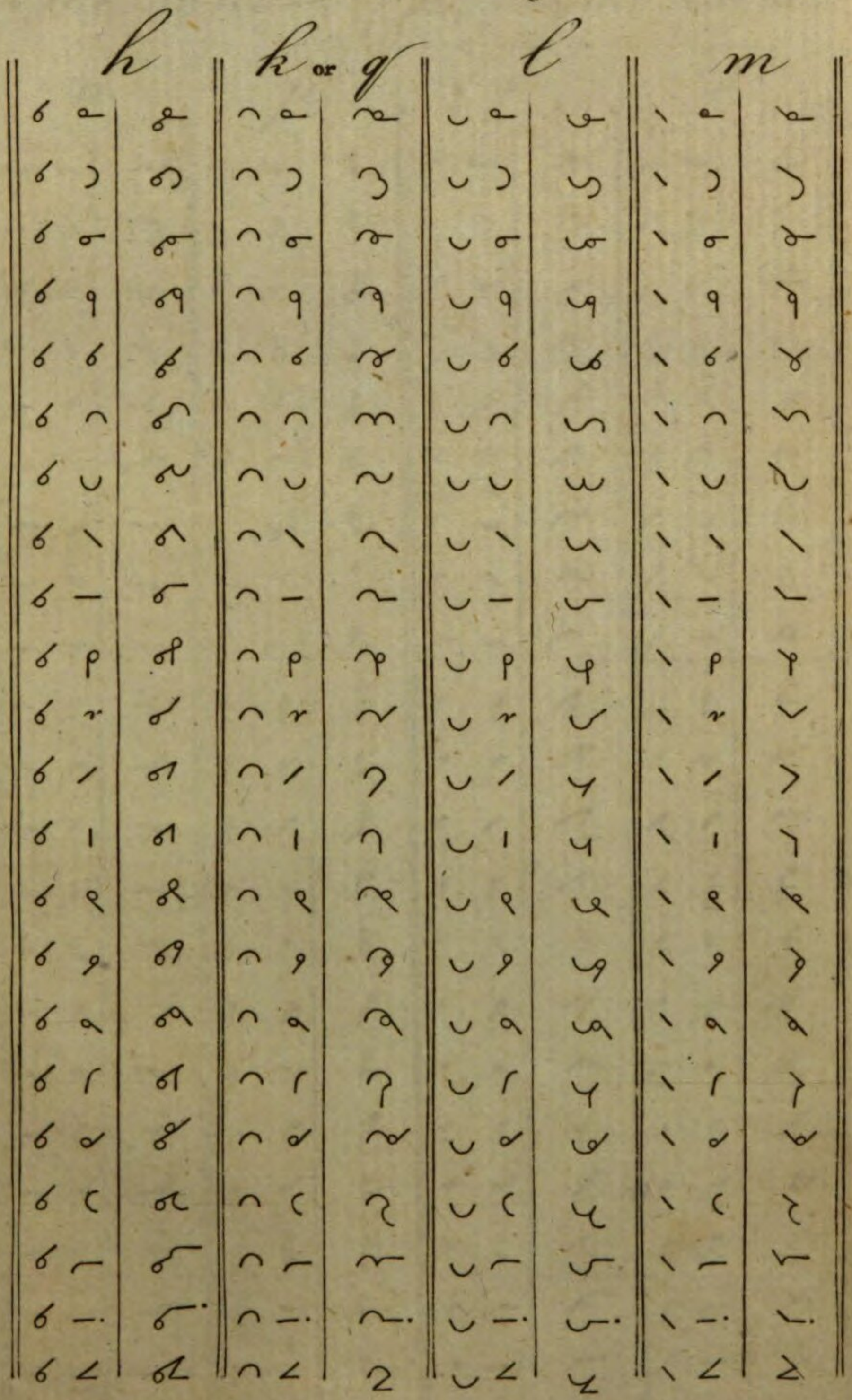
			Examples referd to in the preceding Pages		
			No.		
B		be or by			
D		do			
F or V		for			
G ~ J		God	1	Page 23	
H		have	2	28	
K ~ Q		know	3	28	
L		Lord	4	32	
M		me, my	5	29	
N		and	6	29	
P		peace	7	41	
R		are or or	8	39	
S		Son or Sun	9		
T		that	10	40	
W		with	11	33	
X		example	12	40	
Y		ye or you	13	40	
TH		the	14	40	
SH		shall			
CH		such			
SIS		says			
ing					
tion					

The manner of Joining the Letters.

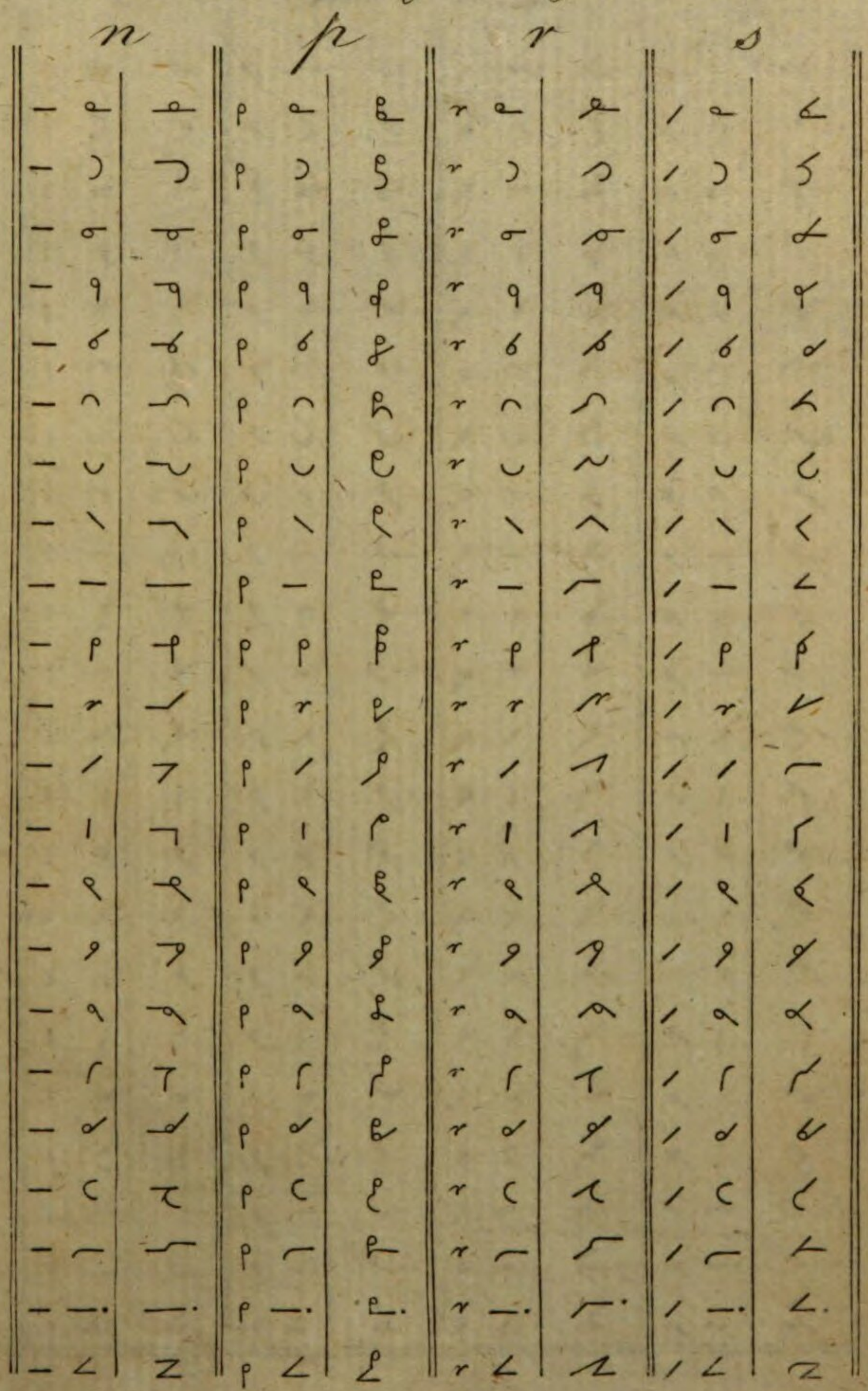




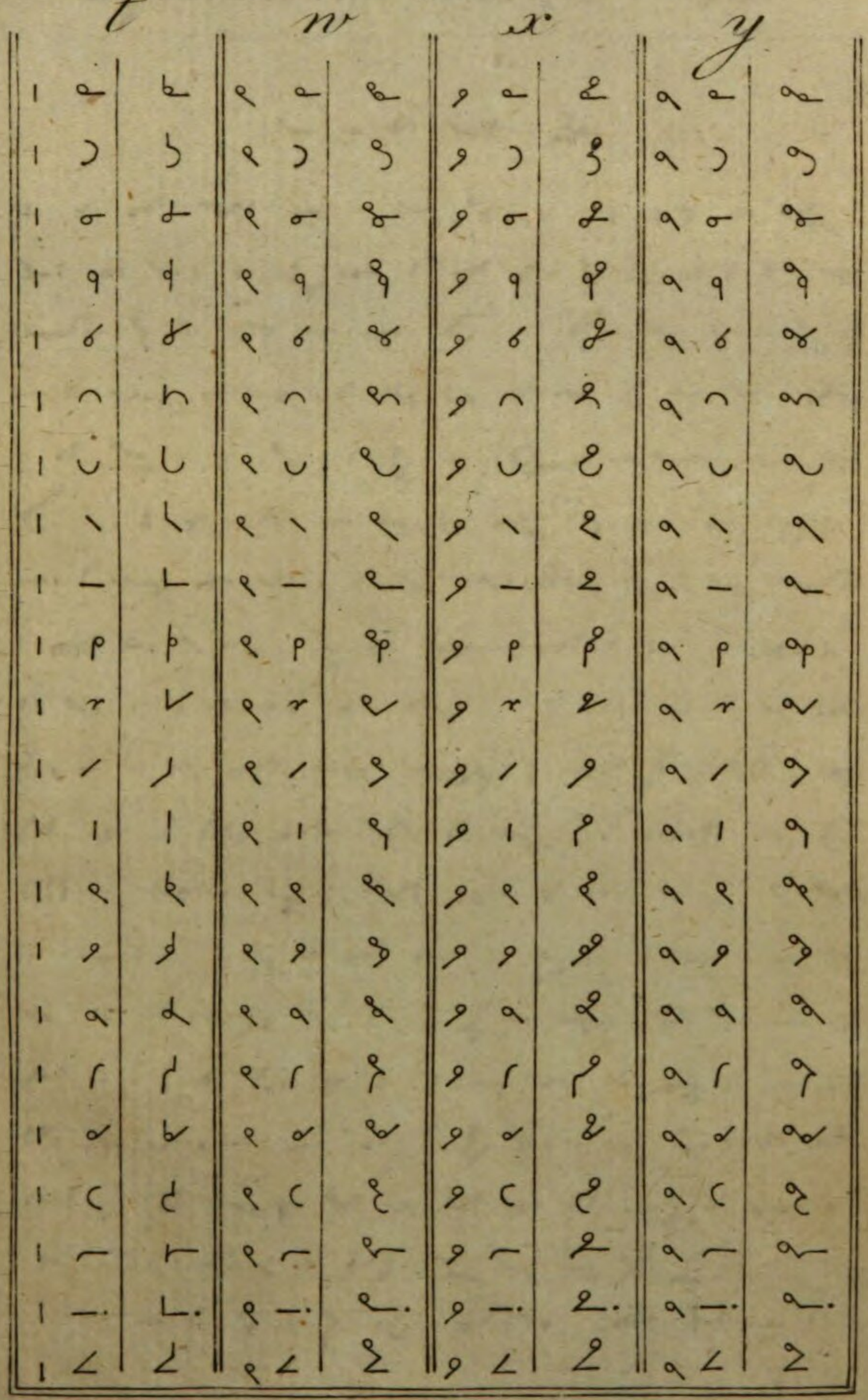
The manner of Joining the Letters.

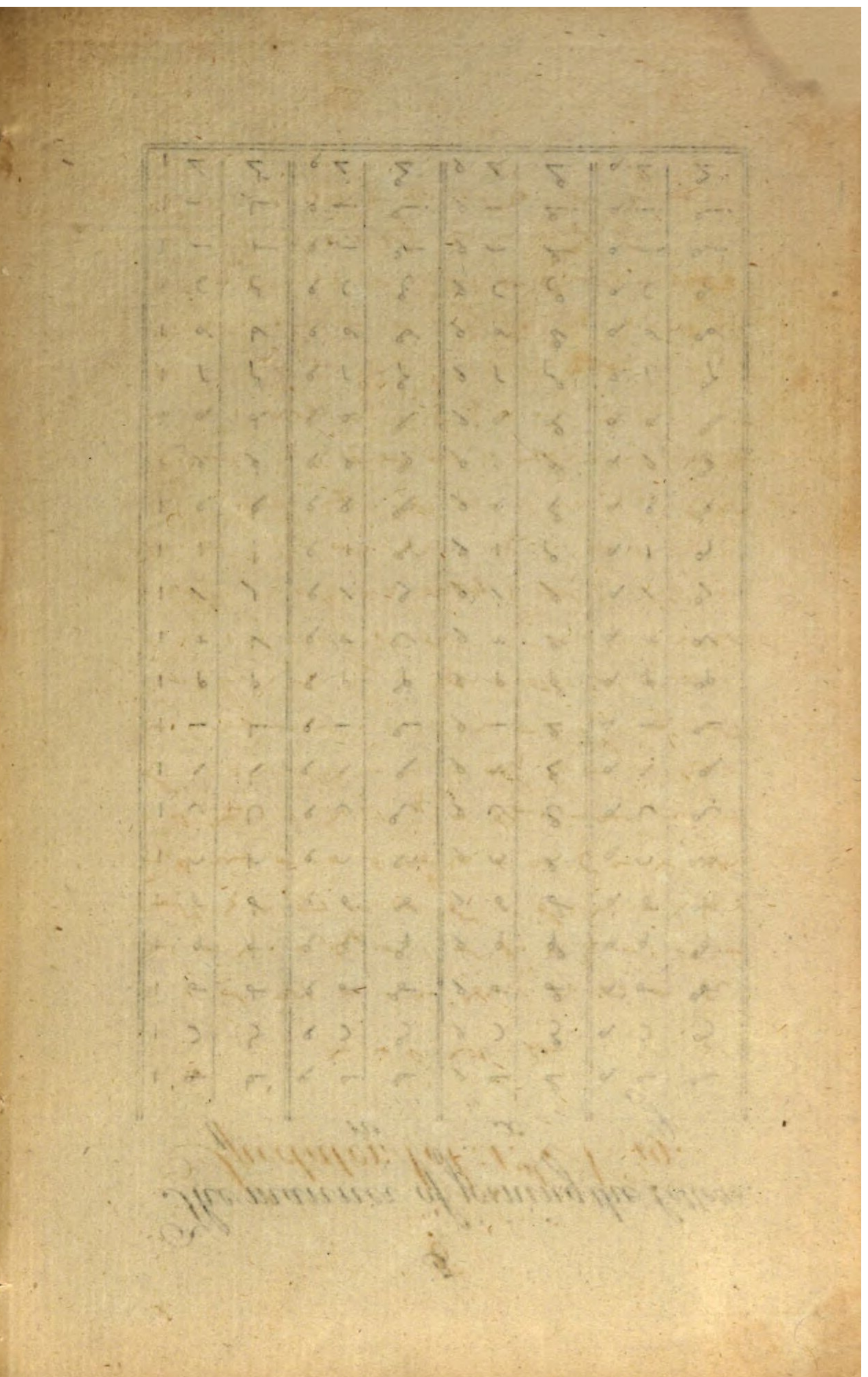


The manner of joining the Letters..



The manner of joining the Letters.





Spectator. Vol: 1.st N.o 49.

Job: Chapter. 14.

Psalm 104, in the Old Testament.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

AN

ESSAY

ON

SHORT-HAND

WRITING.

Which contains, a brief ſurvey of the riſe and progreſs of the art; with an impartial account of the various methods which have been publiſhed ſince its firſt introduction.

AN

ESSAY, &c.

MAN, in a ſtate of nature, unacquainted with commerce, a a ſtranger to avarice, and free from diſſipation, has but few wants to ſupply, or deſires to be gratified;—his ideas are limited to the narrow ſphere in which he acts;—the ſame courſe is purſued, and each revolving year, at its ſtated periods, calls him to the field for a precarious ſubſiſtence, or invites him to repoſe in the languor of inactivity.

In a ſituation ſo perfectly unrefined, language, which is the annexing certain

ſounds

ſounds to determine ideas, muſt neceſſarily remain incomplete, and be as limitted as the ideas which ſuch a ſtate would afford. The ſucceſs or diſappointment of the chace, together with thoſe natural paſſions and their effects, which are inſeparable from humanity, ſeem to mark the outlines of the ideas of ſuch a ſtate, and their correſponding ſounds, which we call language. Thoſe ſentiments which are the reſult of reflection, are yet unproduced by the colliſion of intercourſe and regular ſociety.

When agriculture extended its benevolent influence, and the earth, by its bountiful produce, furniſhed the cultivator with an ample redundancy, the means of ſubſiſtence being thereby enlarged, ſome individuals found leiſure to indulge, and ability to gratify, an inquiſitive diſpoſition, enriched the world

with

with diſcoveries, which proved of the greateſt uſe to community. Thus, arts were invented, cultivation improved, knowledge was increaſed, and every new acquiſition furniſhed an addition to language.

When ſociety arrived at this ſtate of perfection, the perſonal communication of ideas, muſt have been found inadequate to the regularity and good order, which is eſſential to its exiſtence. In ſome countries religious worſhip, in others their laws, produced the invention of characters, to expreſs thoſe ſentiments which they held in the utmoſt veneration.

Antecedent to the invention of letters, hyrogliphic characters were introduced into the heathen theology, which were intended to preſerve the myſterious articles of their faith. Wrapt up

in

in the darkncſs of ſymbolical marks, they conveyed the inſtruction of their theology, in a diſguiſe impenetrable to the eye of the vulgar. Amongſt the hyrogliphics which were uſed, ſome indeed, were expreſs emblems of the thing ſignified*.—A Lyon denoted ſtrength and fortitude, eternity was repreſented by a circle, the figure of an ox ſignified agriculture, &c. This ſeems to be the firſt effort of human ingenuity to give permanency

* If only one ſignification had been aſſigned each character. But among the Egyptians this was by no means the caſe. We learn from Horapollo, that the hawk ſignified in hyrogliphic writing, either God, ſublimity, excellence, humility, the wind, blood, victory, Mars, Venus, or the ſoul; and when they meant to expreſs a ſcribe, a prophet, an undertaker, the ſpleen, ſmelling, laughter, ſneezing, an officer or a judge, the ſymbol of all of theſe was a dog. The interpretation muſt therefore have been vague and uncertain.

manence to our ideas, and render them visible. *

Voltaire, possibly with a view to depreciate sacred history, ascribes a regular language, and the art of writing to the Chinese, at a period long before the Deluge. This ingenious people were very early possessed of an arbitrary character, which served to convey and record their ideas; but it is no less true than surprizing, that, though they made a rapid progress in refinement, when the rest of the world was immersed in barbarism, their improvements were soon at an end, and, through all the successive ages from that period, have scarcely advanced one step in the path of science.

* In the early ages of the world, the mode of perpetuating remarkable events, was by erecting pillars of stone.—In uncivilized nations, this or a similar practice, is still continued.

Bound down by the fetters of an invincible prejudice, and affecting to despise the art of alphabetic writing, they have denied themselves the advantage which the rest of the world have experienced from the invention of letters.—To acquire the knowledge of twenty thousand arbitrary characters, is an undertaking so extensive, which would seem to preclude the mind from seeking any further improvement.—The Chinese have acted directly contrary to the universal practice of all other nations, by this rigid adherence to their own system.

The inhabitants of Europe, a few only excepted, notwithstanding their diversity of language, have for several ages concurred with surprizing harmony, in the choice of the letters by which simple and compound sounds are expressed :—

preſſed:—it is from a combination of theſe ſounds and characters, that all languages are ſpoken, and receive a viſible impreſſion.

The invention of alphabetic writing muſt always be conſidered an important æra in the hiſtory of the improvement of mankind.—The laws of ſtates no longer fluctuated in the minds of legiſlators, but received a legible impreſſion, which could not be effaced.—Great events could now be faithfully recorded, and men of heroic ſentiments were inſpired by new motives, when the hiſtory of their actions could be tranſmitted pure to poſterity.—The vague and inconſiſtent ſtories of oral tradition gave way to a juſt communication of tranſactions as they really happened.—The reſearches of the learned, the maxims of the ſage, and the lectures of the philſo-

pher, assumed a visible form, and continued to instruct when their authors were no more, and the hand that gave them being ceased to exist.

This wonderful art, tends to sweeten life by an enlargement of its social pleasures,—it softens the rigours of absence,—connects the inhabitants of various countries; and, by uniting the wisdom and discoveries of distant ages, we may be said to converse with the most renowned authors of antiquity, as well as with our own cotemporaries.*

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* America has afforded us some new prospects of human nature, and enabled us to take a view of society in its primary state, contrasted with the high degree of civilization to which we are arrived.—The celebrated Dr. Robertson, in his relation of the conquest of Peru, gives us a striking instance of the astonishment excited in an illiterate person, on beholding the surprizing effects of writ-

ing.

The ordinary method of writing s well adapted to expreſs our thoughts with exactneſs and preciſion.—The Roman alphabet, which is almoſt univerſal in Europe, is legible and diſtinct, but the letters are of a complex conſtruction, and

ing.—Atahualpa, emperor of Peru, being impriſoned by Pizarro, the Spaniſh general, the hiſtorian ſays, " Among all the European arts, what he " (Atahualpa) admired moſt, was that of reading " and writing, and he long deliberated with him- " ſelf whether he ſhould regard it as a natural or " acquired talent: in order to determine this, he " deſired one of the ſoldiers who guarded him to " write the name of God on the nail of his thumb. " This he ſhewed ſucceſſively to ſeveral Spa- " niards, aſking its meaning; and, to his amaze- " ment, they all, without heſitation, returned the " ſame anſwer. At length Pizarro entered, and, " on preſenting it to him, he bluſhed, and with " ſome confuſion, was obliged to acknowledge his " ignorance.----From that moment, Atahualpha " conſidered him as a mean perſon, leſs inſtructed " than his ſoldiers."

and not ſo properly adapted to expedition, that whatever is gained in power and ſtrength, is loſt in time, by the difficulty of their formation.

When facility and diſpatch was requiſite, the common received forms of writing, adjuſted to orthography, muſt be found entirely inſufficient.—The eloquent orations of the Romans, when the ſpeaker, animated by a noble zeal for his country, delivered the moſt elevated thoughts with the moſt forcible energy, muſt frequently have periſhed with the ſounds by which they were expreſſed, if ſome other method than the common mode of writing had not been made uſe of.

To what particular nation we are indebted for the invention of ſwift writing, cannot be eaſily aſcertained.—Some

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of the professors of this art, have endeavoured to enhance its importance, by ascribing to it an imaginary antiquity.—They pretend that the art of Short-hand Writing was practiced by the Jews during the reign of David.—This futile opinion is founded on a passage in the Psalms, where David says, "My tongue "is as the pen of a ready writer."—The expression is vague and indecisive when applied to Short-hand Writing, as it evidently relates, merely to persons expert in writing the Hebrew language, and is applicable to any one who can write with freedom and ease.

The Jews, though a people favoured with peculiar advantages; yet were much devoted to mysterious words, to which some of the learned attributed extensive powers.——Sometimes they formed a word by writing the initial and

final

final letters, and frequently expreſſed an entire ſentence, by a junction of the ſeveral initials of which it was compoſed. —Buxtorf has given an elaborate hiſtory of Hebrew contractions, but no inſtance is produced of a new character, applied, for its ſimplicity, to Short-hand Writing.—Pleaſed with a compendious and expeditious way of writing, they introduced their ſyſtem of contractions into many of their moſt valuable writings, which render them obſcure and difficult in their interpretation.——We alſo find, that beſides theſe contractions, they made uſe of arbitrary marks, to expreſs ſome particular words and ſentences.

Amongſt the Greeks, Xenophon, the hiſtorian and philoſopher, is ſaid to have introduced the art of writing by ſimple marks or characters, for the purpoſes of expedition.——Be this as it may, it is evi-

evident from their writings, that this art increaſed in eſteem, and was practiſed by thoſe of the greateſt eminence for learning in Greece.

Rome having extended her conquering arm over the neighbouring nations, forgot not, in the elation of victory, the maxims of her profound policy; but carefully collected whatever related to arms, or tended to the cultivation of the arts, and tranſplanted them into the republic.——On this principle it may be preſumed the art of ſwift writing was conveyed into Italy.

The Romans adopted a number of ſimple marks, or characters, to expreſs words, and ſometimes ſentences. Initials were likewiſe uſed as repreſentations of words. This art arriving gradually at reputation and perfection, was

formed into an extenſive and diſtinct profeſſion—Towards the concluſion of the celebrated Auguſtus's reign, it is ſaid, the writers of Short-hand aſſumed the name *Actuarii*, an appellation derived from an office to which they were particularly appropriated, the digeſting of the public acts.——Swift writing appeared of too much utility to be long confined within the compaſs of any particular profeſſion, every man of letters among the Romans became ambitious of ſo valuable an acquiſition.—Octavius Auguſtus is celebrated for his excellence in this art; and for having communicated it to his grand children. —It is alſo related of Titus Veſpaſian, that he underſtood and practiced it in great perfection. *

In a country, where eloquence excited the

* Vita Octav. Auguſti.

the utmoſt admiration; when, by its perſuaſive powers, like a torrent, it hurried the minds of men irreſiſtably into the courſe it purſued, an art which could give permanence to thoſe fleeting images, muſt have been highly received, and conſidered of great importance.—Plutatch, in his life of Cato, mentions that the celebrated ſpeech of Cato upon the Cataline conſpiracy, was taken down and preſerved in Short-hand.

The difficulty of its attainment at this period, muſt have been an inſuperable obſtacle to its being diffuſed, eſpecially to thoſe whoſe attention was almoſt entirely engroſſed in the cauſe of the public; if it had not been an object of the higheſt eſtimation.—Biſhop Wilkins, in his work entitled "*An Eſſay towards a real character and philoſophical language,*" throws ſome light upon

the ſtate of this art amongſt the Romans at the time we allude to.——" Eleven " hundred arbitrary characters were in- " vented by the old poet Ennius, to ex- " preſs verbs, to which number Tullius " Tyro, Cicero's Libertus, others ſay " Cicero himſelf, added many others " to ſignify the particles, after whom " Philargyrus and Mecænal added " many more."—Thoſe characters continued to accumulate, until they increaſed to many thouſands, a burthen ſo ſtupendous, that at this day, it would deter any perſon from ſo arduous an undertaking.

After the deſtruction of the Roman empire by the irruption of the Goths, this art ſhared a common fate with the reſt of the arts and ſciences, and continued in a long night of profound oblivion.—About the beginning of the ſix-

teenth

teenth century, in the revival of other ſciences, ſwift writing appeared once more from amidſt the ruin in which it had been overwhelmed.——Mr. Radcliffe, of Plymouth, it is ſaid, was the firſt perſon who introduced into this country a ſyſtem of abbreviation—his ſcheme is not entitled to the appellation of Short-hand, it being only a ſuppreſſion of the vowels, whilſt the leading conſonants are retained—No alteration was attempted, by ſubſtituting ſimple marks for the compound ſtrokes which compoſe our principal letters.——This diſcovery is ſaid to be made by Timothy Bright, M. D. in the year 1588, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Bright dedicated to that princeſs his treatiſe of Short-hand, which he called CHARACTRIE, *or the Art of Short, Swift, and Secret Writing*.—In his addreſs to her Majeſty, he was ſo much elated

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with the value and importance of this invention, that we find him making uſe of the following expreſſion: "Cicero "accounted it worthy of his labour, "and no leſs profitable to the common-"wealth, to invent a ſpeedy way of "writing by character, and mine wants "nothing to equal the device of Ci-"cero, but your Majeſty's allowance "and Cicero's name."

To give a particular deſcription of all the Short-hand books which have been publiſhed, would be no leſs tedious than unintereſting—I ſhall only mention the titles in the order they were publiſhed, and point out wherein any of the authors differed from the general plan.

Soon after Mr. Peter Bales publiſhed an improvement upon the former, entitled, *Brachygraphy*——This, as well as

Mr.

Mr. Bright's, was very burthenſome to the memory.

The method of writing by marks to repreſent the letters, is by ſome aſcribed to John Willis, B. A. whoſe ſyſtem was publiſhed about the year 1600, and went through many editions in a ſhort time. The title is *Stenography, or Short-hand Writing by Spelling Characterics.*

Mr. Dix compoſed a book of Short-hand, intended as an improvement of the former: the title is *Brachygraphy; or, Short Writing by Characters.* Printed Anno 1633.

In the year 1647 Thomas Shelton publiſhed a ſyſtem of Short-hand, which he titles, *Tachygraphy; or Short Writing the moſt eaſy, exact, and ſpeedy,* &c.—And in the year 1659 he publiſhed another on the ſame ſubject, which he calls *Zeiglo-*

graphia;

graphia; or, a New Art of Short Writing —In the preface he mentions his having publiſhed a ſyſtem about thirty years before; but I have not been able to procure it.

In the year 1655 Theophilus Metcalf publiſhed a book, which he called, *Radio-Stenography; or, Short Writing the moſt eaſy, exact, and lenial, that hath ever been attained or taught.*

Mr. George Dalgarno, M. A. in the year 1656, made an attempt to improve the art of Short-hand Writing, by expreſſing the auxiliary particles of the Engliſh language by diſtinct points about the radical words. *

In 1658 a book was publiſhed, called, *an*

* Plot's Hiſtory of Oxfordſhire.

An Epitome of Stenography, by John Everardt.

The year following, another treatiſe was publiſhed by Noah Bridges, the title of which is *Stenographie and Cryptographie*; or, *The Art of ſhort and ſecret writing*.—In this, as well as the former, the improper choice of alphabetical marks is ſupplied by arbitrary and ſymbolical characters.—His *Cryptographie* is only a tranſpoſition of the letters of the alphabet, for the purpoſe of ſecrecy, of which he gives various examples.

Jeremiah Rich in the year 1669, publiſhed a ſcheme of ſhort writing, which he calls *Semigraphie*; or, *the World's Rarity*.—This for many years was much approved of, and mentioned by the celebrated Mr. Locke in his Treatiſe on Education, when recom-

mending Short-hand as an uſeful and neceſſary acccompliſhment.

Mr. Rich's method was reviſed by Mr. Addy and Mr. Botley; who made ſeveral alterations in the forms of the letters.

In the year 1672 WILLIAM MASON publiſhed a book, the title of which is *A Pen pluck'd from an Eagle's wing*; or *The moſt ſwift, compendious and ſpeedy method of Short-writing, &c.* After laying down the alphabet and ſome general rules, there is what he calls the practical table of words and ſentences in alphabetical order, to the amount of 1132.——The characters to repreſent theſe, are, for the moſt part, arbitrary.—In the year 1694 Mr. Maſon publiſhed what he thought a more perfect ſyſtem, which he called, *Art's advancement*. This he afterwards improv-

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ed in a ſubſequent publication; the title is *La Plume volante*, which, he ſays, was founded on much practice and experience.

In the year 1674 a method of ſhort-hand writing was publiſhed by William Hopkins.—The title is, *The flying Penman*; or, *the Art of Short writing, by a more eaſy, exact, compendious and ſpeedy way.*—Though there appears no material difference in this, from the preceding methods, yet in point of neatneſs in execution, the engravings being ſo elegant, claims the ſuperiority.

An improvement upon the art of ſwift writing was publiſhed by Mr. STEEL, in a book which he calls SHORT-WRITING, *begun by Nature, compleated by Art, &c.*—There is an arrangement of the whole under three diſtinct heads. —1ſt. He ſhews what words may be

written in emblem.—2d. Such words as may be written by arbitrary characters.—3d. Such as respect the moods and tenses.—As in writing of words, the vowels are expressed by the following consonant being in the place of the vowel, so in like manner in writing sentences the tenses are put in place of the persons, and are thereby to be understood.

Mr. Steel was succeeded by, ELISHA COLES; the tenth edition of this book, which he calls, *The newest, plainest, and shortest Short-hand*, &c. was published in the year 1707.——After giving an account of all the short-hand books then extant, with their alphabets and fundamental rules, he points out a new mode of contracting words; which is, that all monosyllables may be expressed by single characters: To effect this, he

proposes

propoſes a threefold power to each letter, and that theſe again may be diſtinguiſhed by allotting to them a threefold ſituation, ſuch as above, below, or in the middle of a real or ſuppoſed line, thus varied he thinks would comprehend the whole.—The confuſion which this ſcheme muſt neceſſarily occaſion in the reading is obvious.

A book of Short-hand, under the title of *The plaineſt, eaſieſt, and prettieſt method of Short writing*, &c. was publiſhed, Ann. 1712, by FRANCIS TURNER.—The marks which he applies to the letters, many of them are the ſame, and are only to be diſtinguiſhed by the ſize or fullneſs of the ſtroke.

In the year 1715 Samuel Lane publiſhed a method, which he informs us in the title is, *The art of Short-hand made lineal as the common long-hand*, &c.

Mr.

Mr. Lane was ſucceeded by JOHN WESTON, whoſe ſyſtem was publiſhed in the year 1727, the title is, STENOGRAPHY COMPLEATED; or, *The Art of Short-hand brought to perfection.*—The voluminous appearance which Mr. Weſton's book makes, is an indication of the perplexity of the ſyſtem. It conſiſts of upwards of 200 large octavo pages—the rules are numerous, the arbitrary and ſymbolical characters much more ſo.——Many of the rules are trifling, and others of little importance to the purpoſes of expedition.

To acquire a proper knowledge of his ſyſtem, ſo as to make it in any degree uſeful, muſt require much more attention, than moſt people have either inclination or time to beſtow.

Though the author vainly aſcribes the *utmoſt perfection* to his work, and the

impoſſibility

impoſſibility of rendering ſwift-writing more complete than he had; yet any one who will take the trouble of examining with attention, and comparing his ſyſtem with others much more antient, will ſoon be convinced of his having made no real improvement upon his predeceſſors, but in ſome reſpects rendered it more complex; and later publications clearly demonſtrate, that he left his work *unfiniſhed.*

In the year 1736, PHILIP GIBBS, M. A. publiſhed *An Eſſay towards a further improvement of Short-hand.*——In the introduction, Mr. Gibbs entertains his readers with a hiſtory of ſwift-writing.---The improvement he propoſes appears exceeding prolix.----Fourteen of the letters of the alphabet are diſtinguiſhed only by two characters; one to be uſed with vowels ſounded ſhort, and

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the other to ſignify the ſame vowels when ſounded long.——To diſtinguiſh between vowels and dipthongs, is another reaſon given for this practice, which of courſe muſt occaſion great confuſion, both in writing and reading.

Mr. Gibbs was ſucceeded by AAULY M'AULAY, who publiſhed a method of Short-hand, under the title of POLYGRAPHY; or, *Short-hand made eaſy to the meaneſt capacity*, &c.----Mr. M'Aulay, like many others, appears highly pleaſed with his own work, has much to ſay in commendation of his performance; but a ſlight peruſal of it, will convince any one acquainted with the ſubject, that it is by no means deſerving the encomiums he ſo liberally beſtows upon it.

His method is divided into two parts; the firſt part he calls long Short-

hand

hand, the ſecond, *ſhort, ſhort-hand*:—The reaſon given for this curious diſtinction is, there are characters for every letter in the common alphabet, by which words are written the ſame as in long hand; but finding the advantages of a ſet of new characters exceeding trifling when a ſtrict adherence to orthography was preſerved, uſing the ſame number of letters to expreſs each word—His ſhort ſhort-hand is on purpoſe to remove the abovementioned inconvenience; therefore, inſtead of writing words in full, he ſubſtitutes one or two ſyllables for the whole—Such as *corrupt*: for corruption, *juris*: for, juriſdiction, *ſymp*: for ſymptom, &c. Words thus written, however different their terminations may be, the ſenſe muſt determine their meaning.—He likewiſe makes the ſame character ſtand for many words by a va-

riation of its ſize and poſition; beſides, he has a great many arbitrary and ſymbolical marks.—The confuſion and uncertainty which muſt neceſſarily attend ſuch nice diſtinctions, is ſo very obvious, that the moſt accurate practitioners, when diſpatch is required, would commit the groſſeſt miſtakes.

Notwithſtanding the very great uncertainty of interpreting words written according to the rules he preſcribes, he tells his readers that his method "has this peculiar advantage, to ſuit all languages, is eaſily read by another, and is legible to the writer at any diſtance of time." Pleaſed with the importance of the diſcovery, he fancied he had made, in order to ſecure the property, and give it an air of authority, a patent is obtained.——

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If Mr. M'Aulay had examined the works of his predeceſſors, he might have diſcovered ſeveral methods much better calculated to anſwer the purpoſes of Short-hand than his *Polygraphy*.

Mr. GURNEY's Syſtem, which he calls BRACHYGRAPHY, *or, Short-hand made eaſy to the meaneſt capacity*, &c. is profeſſedly founded upon, and ſaid to be an improvement of, Mr. Maſon's *La Plume Volante*——He has made ſeveral alterations in the characters for the letters; but whether, by the tranſpoſition, the letters are eaſier in their junction, and more readily diſtinguiſhed, than thoſe of his author, can only be aſcertained by a thorough knowledge of both.

This ſyſtem, like all the foregoing, ſeems not ſufficiently adapted to the

principle ends for which the art is intended, I mean expedition and legibility. The characters are not ſo ſimple as to admit of perfection in the former requiſite; and with regard to the latter, from a ſameneſs of conſtruction in different characters, and combination of characters, confuſion is unavoidable.—As in our language, ſo likewiſe in Short-hand, the alphabet muſt be conſidered the baſis, which, if wrong, the purpoſes for which another mode of writing is introduced, are fruſtrated.

The alphabet conſiſts of an equal number of characters as there are letters in the common one.—Of the twenty-ſix marks he has made choice of to repreſent the letters, ten of them are of a complex form, and repreſent two other letters join'd —No attention ſeems to have been paid to the judicious application of the ſim-

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ple characters to the letters which moſt frequently occur, for the moſt ſimple and eaſieſt made line is applied to a vowel, which by the rules is not to be uſed but at the beginning of a word.

Beſides the letters of the alphabet, there are 180 ſymbolical characters, whereby the words and ſentences annexed to them are underſtood; theſe, with thirty-four prepoſitions and terminations, which are arbitrary, and totally independent of the alphabet, muſt be well fixed on the memory.—There are likewiſe *twenty ſhortning rules*, which he ſays he has reduced from 42 in his author: with theſe likewiſe the learner muſt combat, if he means to be a complete maſter of the ſyſtem.

So very unſyſtematical and burthenſome to the memory, ſo productive of

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confuſion and uncertainty as this method is, we are told it has gone through eight editions; a ninth was lately publiſhed, announced in the title-page to have been conſiderably improved by Joſeph Gurney, ſon and ſucceſſor to the author.—However, we find no real improvement is made, the alphabet being the ſame as in the former.—The rules indeed are new model'd—The pompous panegyrics in verſe to the author excluded, and a few ſpecimens from the State-trials are added, with the ſame ſubject in common print, ſhewing the letters which compoſe the words in the engraved plates.

Mr. Angell's Syſtem is likewiſe another improvement upon Mr. Maſon's third book.—The preface contains a hiſtory of ſwift-writing. What follows

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is an Introduction, divided into twelve ſections, which is ſucceeded by twenty-one engraved pages: the firſt contains the alphabet, with rules for placing the vowels,—the ſecond, double and triple conſonants,—the third, prepoſitions and terminations,—fourth and fifth, terminanative and contracting rules,—ſixth, an alphabet of words, including the perſons, moods, and tenſes,—the ſeventh to the fourteenth is an alphabetical praxis —fourteenth, is compoſed of law terms and phraſes—fifteenth, words uſed in phyſic—ſixteenth, arbitrary and ſymbolical characters—ſeventeenth, marks for proper names, &c.

Whether Mr. Angell has ſucceeded in improving Mr. Maſon's *La Plume Volante*, is a matter of no great conſequence. Certain it is, that his method

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is far from being *eaſy*, *compendious*, or *lineal*, but the reverſe—Many of the alphabetical characters are complicated, and ſuch as are ſimple in their form, are improperly applied.——Beſides fifty-eight double and triple conſonants, chiefly arbitrary, there are about thirty marks for prepoſitions and terminations —ſome marks for proper names, and anhundred and ten ſymbolical and arbitrary characters, which have no connection with the alphabet.——Nothing but an uncommon deſire of acquiring Shorthand, could induce any perſon to engage in an undertaking ſo very burthenſome to the memory, ſo much confuſion, uncertainty, and irregularity.

Beſides the various ſyſtems already mentioned, there have been ſeveral others publiſhed formerly, as well as of

late

late years, by Meſſrs. LABOURER, FACY, HEATH, EWEN, ANNET, DODRIDGE, BLOSSET, BRYANT, GRAVES, and ASHTON, MAVOR, &c.

As all of them appear to be derived from one ſource, and ſo much connected together, the improvement each of them has claimed ſeems only to exiſt in the fancy of the authors.—It is evident, that although, by great application, together with the aſſiſtance of a good memory, ſome of theſe methods may have anſwered the end propoſed to the inventors, and a few others of uncommon abilities and diligence, yet, none of our antient, and very few of our modern writers on this ſubject have founded their ſyſtems upon ſimple and rational principles, ſo as to render them univerſally uſeful.

The marks which they ſubſtitute for letters are not ſufficiently diſtinct.—All of them make uſe of a line in four directions, likewiſe four ſemicircles, and to make up the alphabet they have recourſe to a combination of the ſtreight lines, or a variation of their ſize.—From ſuch a combination, the characters not only take up more time to delineate them, but likewiſe, when joined to other characters, there ariſes a conſiderable difficulty to determine whether there be written one letter only, or two connected together.

The want of ſimplicity in the formation of the characters, produced a great inconvenience, by taking off the pen in the middle of a word.—They found it abſolutely neceſſary to leave out vowels in the middle of words, and only to inſert them at the beginning or end; and

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in order to ſignify thoſe that were omitted, they made the following conſonant in the vowel's place.—Though the diſjoining the letters in this manner, ſerved to diſtinguiſh complicated characters; yet, this practice not only retards the writer, but being under the neceſſity of taking off the pen two or three times in a word, renders the writing obſcure and difficult in the interpretation.

The immenſe number of arbitrary and ſymbolical marks were likewiſe occaſioned by the improper choice of characters to repreſent the letters of the alphabet.—It is very obſervable, the hyrogliphics continued to decreaſe in proportion as the alphabetical characters approached to the ſimplicity derived from ſtreight and curved lines, which

are both eaſily joined, and readily diſtinguiſhed.

No other characters but the alphabet ſhould be uſed, provided the end could be obtained without introducing any others.—Whatever has been ſaid in ſupport of ſymbolical characters, of the advantages which attend them, being more than a recompence for the trouble of getting them at firſt by rote,——it is obvious that characters made at random to ſtand for words and ſentences, not only require cloſe attention and long practice to get them fixed on the mind, ſo as to make them readily; but without conſtant practice, they are ſoon forgotten, and when the writing is laid aſide for ſome time, the perſon who wrote it, if he can read it at all, finds the greateſt difficulty.——On the contrary

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when words are written by the alphabet alone, though laid aſide for a number of years, they cannot be forgotten, as the alphabet, when firmly impreſſed on the mind, will always be retained.

The late Mr. JOHN BYROM, M.A. made the moſt ſucceſsful attempt to remove the prejudices againſt Short-hand, occaſioned by the former perplexed and tedious methods.

He taught this art for ſeveral years to a conſiderable number of perſons of taſte and judgment.—After he died his method was publiſhed under the title of the *Univerſal Engliſh ſhort-hand*, printed 1767.—Much was expected from a perſon of ſo great eminence and abilities.—The expectation of the public was not diſappointed —— his method was perfectly

new,

new, and had a juſt claim to originality, both in the formation of his characters, in reducing their number, and in expreſſing all vowels by points.

Notwithſtanding the great acquiſition to the art of Swift-writing by this new ſyſtem of Mr. Byrom's, it is liable to ſeveral objections, the moſt material of which are, his having more characters, than one to expreſs each diſtinct ſound. His reaſon for this multiplication of characters, is the greater convenience of joining and keeping the writing lineal, the writer is at liberty to uſe which of the characters he thinks moſt conveniently joins with the preceding or following conſonant.

This objection at firſt may appear of little or no importance; for it may be urged,

urged, that in long hand ſeveral of the letters are made in different forms without the leaſt confuſion; but in long hand, the body of the letter is ſtill preſerved. Beſides, theſe variations in the form of ſome letters are not for the purpoſe of diſpatch, but ariſes merely from cuſtom.

When there is ſo much dependance upon every letter, as expreſſing a diſtinct ſound, and theſe ſounds ſo very different from each other; it is neceſſary that every character ſhould be exceedingly ſimple and diſtinct.—The writer having a choice of two or three different marks to expreſs the ſame letter, muſt often be at a loſs to know which of them will moſt conveniently unite with the ſubſequent character; beſides, that when the choice is made, the diffi-

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culty of reading will be in no ſmall degree increaſed.

Mr. Byrom being too profuſe of the moſt ſimple and diſtinguiſhable characters, is under the neceſſity of making nice diſtinctions in forming new ones, by making a twirl at the beginning of the ſemi-circular marks; ſo that, without great accuracy in writing, the reader will be apt to miſtake one letter for another.

The ſtrict adherence to the places which are aſſigned for vowels (which are repreſented by points) is likewiſe productive of much uncertainty in the reading.—When the writer is in haſte, it is impoſſible to be very exact in the placing of the points, and the miſplac-

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ing of one will deceive the reader ſooner than the total want of it. His rules for contracting are complex, and cannot properly be attended to when diſpatch is required.

Notwithſtanding theſe objections I have hinted at, Mr. Byrom's method is ſuperior in every reſpect to that of any of his predeceſſors.——The principles upon which it is founded are in the main rational, his characters ſimple, and for the moſt part fitly applied.

In the year 1775 an improvement on the above-mentioned ſyſtem was publiſhed by Mr. PALMER, who treats the ſubject in a very judicious manner, and as one thoroughly acquainted with the art.—He has made ſeveral alterations,

and, perhaps, ſome to advantage; but there are ſtill difficulties remaining to make it anſwer the important purpoſes for which it is intended, and render its practice more eaſy.

Prior to the publication of Mr. Byrom's method, a ſyſtem was publiſhed by WILLIAM TIFFIN, the title is, *an Improvement on Swift - Writing*. To furniſh a ſet of marks to repreſent the vowels and conſonants, he propoſes an imitation of the poſition of the tongue and lips in the various acts of articulation.—He gives a variety of examples of provincial dialects; but tho' he endeavours to illuſtrate his ſcheme in 12 engraved pages, yet there is ſo much intricacy, it is difficult to determine as to its merits.—However, there is a

more

more recent publication upon the ſame principles, which deſerves particular attention; the title of which is,

NATURAL SHORT-HAND; *wherein the nature of ſpeech, and the manner of pronunciation, are briefly explained, and a natural reaſon aſſigned from thence, for the particular form of every ſtroke, &c.* by W. HOLDSWORTH and W. ALDRIDGE. Publiſhed about the year 1768.

This method is exceedingly curious. —— There is a delineation of the poſition of the organs of ſpeech, and the paſſage of the breath, in the acts of pronouncing the *labels*, *dentals*, *palatines*, *ſibelants*, *ſemivowels*, and vowels. The characters to repreſent the letters

in the common alphabet are taken from a ſtreight line in four directions, a circle; alſo, ſemicircumferences and ſegments of an elipſis in four directions. This plan produces more characters than they have occaſion for,—they make choice of the moſt ſimple, and reject the others.

Theſe gentlemen have exhibited a theoretical ingenuity in their ſyſtem, which commands our admiration, and excites our reſpect. Whilſt we follow them, however, through the intricacies of ſpeculation, it were to be wiſhed, that their endeavours had been directed to facilitate the practice, and thereby render it more generally uſeful.——Suppoſing the exact poſition of the tongue and lips, and the paſſage of the breath in the various articulations, could be aſcer-

tained,

tained, characters ſuited to ſuch motions of the organs of ſpeech, would be of little conſequence, either as to the ſimplicity of form, or their being readily joined with each other.—The moſt apparent advantage which could be obtained from having letters derived from this ſource, is their being more eaſily fixed on the mind, from their analogy to the manner of pronunciation; but this is by no means an object worthy of ſacrificing others of much more importance.

Upon the whole, this ſyſtem ſeems chiefly calculated to pleaſe the fanciful, and entertain the curious without much improvement in point of neatneſs, expedition, or legibility.

In the year 1779, a method of ſwift writing was publiſhed by W. BLANCHARD, the title of which is, *A Complete Syſtem*

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of Short-hand, being an Improvement upon all the authors whose systems have yet been made public.——From the above title the reader would naturally expect the defects of all other methods pointed out, or at least wherein this promised improvement consisted, but in these particulars the author has [not thought proper to gratify his readers.

The whole is comprized in two small engraved plates, with a few pages explanatory of the engravings.—The first is divided into eleven columns—consisting of the alphabet,—joining of the letters,—uniting of verbs,—rules for vowels places,——arbitrary and symbolical characters.—The other plate only contains the first psalm as a specimen.

Several of the alphabetical marks bear

too

too great a reſemblance to be diſtinguiſhed, if not made with greater accuracy, than poſſibly can be obſerved when diſpatch is required.—And as different letters are repreſented by marks made in the ſame direction, with no other variation than ſize, muſt neceſſarily be productive of much confuſion and uncertainty.

He ſuppoſes prepoſitions and terminations may be ſignified by points differently placed about the word.—To illuſtrate this,—a ſquare repreſents a word, nine points are variouſly placed at the angles and ſides of the ſuppoſed word, to denote eighteen prepoſitions and terminations.——However diſtinct theſe points may appear, when placed about a large ſquare, yet the ſcheme, when reduced to practice, muſt not only be attended

tended with great uncertainty, but occaſion groſs miſtakes in the interpretation.

Having given ſome account of the riſe and progreſs of the art of Swift-writing, I ſhall conclude this Eſſay with a few Obſervations

On the UTILITY *of the Art.*

THERE is no great neceſſity to ſay much on this part of the ſubject; it being univerſally allowed that " Short-hand writing, on account of its great and general utility, merits a much higher rank among the arts and ſciences, than is commonly alloted to it.—Its uſefulneſs is not confined to any particular profeſſion or ſcience, but univer-

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ſal; therefore is by no means unworthy the attention and ſtudy of men of erudition and genius."—What has been ſaid with reſpect to the art of writing, may, with equal propriety, be applied to Short-hand, with ſome addition. Aſſiſted by this art, not only the thoughts which paſs in our own mind receive a viſible form, and can be communicated to the mind and underſtanding of others, at the moſt diſtant period, but likewiſe we are enabled to catch the living ideas of a public ſpeaker in the very words by which they are conveyed to our own ears.—Copy from the lips of an orator all his ſtudied beauties of language, his arrangement of elegant expreſſions, and force of reaſoning, which we can with the utmoſt ſatisfaction, review at pleaſure.

Short-hand is remarkably uſeful for

the assistance of young gentlemen in the prosecution of their studies, whether directed to divinity, law, physic, or any other purpose where a liberal education is required.—The instructions intended by public lectures on the various branches of literature, are more deeply fixed on the mind when written in the time they are delivered, than is possible for them to be without writing.——— The impression from written discourses, is stronger and more lasting than that of oral ones, which having admission to the understanding by one of the inlets to knowledge only, are sometimes as transitory as the sounds which compose them.—Every person's experience confirms the truth of this.

It's usefulness extends beyond the time limited for the education of youth, and con-

continues through life in the exercise of the various professions in which they may be employed. *

The utility of this art is not restricted merely to writing after a public speaker, but is remarkably beneficial for a variety of other purposes, particularly to such who

* Mr. Molineux, in a letter bearing date Dublin August 12, 1693, to the celebrated Mr. Locke, concerning the education of his son, says "One "thing more I shall venture to add to what you "direct concerning Writing; that is, I will have "my son taught Short-hand; I do not mean to "that perfection to copy a speech from the mouth "of a ready speaker, but to be able to write it "readily for his own private business.——Believe "me, sir, it is as useful a knack as a man of bu-"ness, or any schollar can be master of. I have "found the want of it, and seen the advantage of "it in others frequently."

who are of a ſtudious diſpoſition, and employ their time in reading and making obſervations, either for amuſement, their own improvement, or the benefit of ſociety.

It often happens, that the moſt pertinent remarks, the moſt lively images, occur to the mind inſtantaneouſly; but are ſo tranſient and fleeting, that ſome times before they can be reduced into writing in the common way, thoſe extenſive ideas, with the beautiful language which then flowed to expreſs them, are quickly gone, and perhaps never to be recalled.—Nothing can be more deſirable than an art whereby thoſe ſentiments may be noted down as ſoon as they are conceived in the mind.

At firſt it may appear matter of ſurprize, that an art of ſuch acknowledged utility, ſhould not be more encouraged. When we conſider its hiſtory, which affords us ſo many inſtances of ſyſtems tedious and perplexed, our wonder muſt rather be excited, that it has met with any reception, than, that the knowledge of it has not been more extenſively diffuſed; for whatever advantages could be derived from a knowledge of this branch, would ſcarcely be deemed equivalent to the labour of ſuch an acquiſition.

In the Treatiſe I have ſubmitted to the public, it has been my utmoſt endeavour to avoid thoſe glaring defects complained of in others.——By analyzing and reducing the art to firſt principles, it no longer appears in a ſhape formidable, and likely to diſmay

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the learner.—Founded on the ſimple idea of an alphabet alone, containing every thing eſſential to Short-hand writing, it now offers facility to the writer, and permanency to the communication.

F I N I S.

Williamson, William

Stenography

London 1782